(b) to (d) Ministry of Law had vetted draft notification for toll collection of this bridge with the comment that toll collection may be stopped after recovery of cost of the bridge, interest, maintenance and special repair expenditures. However, as per the National Highways (Fees for the use of National Highways Section and Permanent Bridge-Public Funded Projects) Rules, 1997 made pursuant to the National Highways Act, 1956, the fee for this bridge is to be collected in perpetuity by the executive agency. As such toll collection on this bridge is not to be stopped.

Upgradation of State Highway as NHs in Karnataka

1331. SHRI K.B. SHANAPPA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal pending with the Central Government for upgradation of Bidar-Srirangapattanam State Highway into National Highway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, any other State Highway in Karnataka that has been taken up for upgradation as National Highway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (c) The State Government has submitted a proposal for declaration of Bidar-Srirangapattanam State Highway as a National Highway. A portion of the road between Humanabad and Jewargi has already been declared as a National Highway. However, it has not been handed over by the Karnataka Government. There is no proposal for declaration of the balance portion of this road and any other road in Karnataka as a National Highway since at present emphasis is only on upgradation and development of the existing National Highways and not on the declaration of new National Highways.

Road accidents

†1332. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our country is reckoned amongst a handful of unfortunate countries in terms of number of road accidents and the people killed;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the number of such accidents particularly in National Capital Region of Delhi has increased enormously during the last four months; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps being taken by Government to prevent such accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) The available road

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.